

# Glossary of Benchmarking Terms

<b>Activity</b>	A series of transactions which translates inputs into outputs using resources in response to a business requirement; sequences of activities in logical combinations form processes.
<b>Benchmark</b>	A measured, “best-in-class” achievement; a reference or measurement standard for comparison; this performance level is recognized as the standard of excellence for a specific business process.
<b>Benchmarking</b>	A systematic and continuous measurement process; a process of continuously comparing and measuring an organization's business processes against business leaders anywhere in the world to gain information which will help the organization take action to improve its performance.
<b>Benchmarking gap</b>	The difference in performance between the benchmark for a particular activity and other companies in the comparison; the measured leadership advantage of the benchmark organization over other organizations.
<b>Best-in-class</b>	Outstanding process performance within an industry; words used as synonyms are best practice and best-of-breed.
<b>Best-of-breed</b>	Outstanding process performance within an industry; words used as synonyms are best practice and best-in-class.
<b>Best practices</b>	Superior performance within a function independent of industry, leadership, management, or operational methods or approaches that lead to exceptional performance; best practice is a relative term and usually indicates innovative or interesting business practices which have been identified as contributing to improved performance at leading companies.

<b>Capability mapping</b>	The analysis of the business infrastructure of an organization to determine unique abilities and potential.
<b>Code of conduct</b>	A behavioral convention which describes the protocol of behaviors—the set of conventions prescribing correct etiquette and procedures to be used in a common activity.
<b>Common interest group</b>	A network of individuals who share a mutual interest in a specific subject and have agreed to share their own experiences.
<b>Competitive analysis</b>	Analyzing the magnitude and rationale for the gap between one's own organizational performance measures and the performance measures of competing organizations.
<b>Competitive</b>	A measure of organizational performance compared against benchmarking competing organizations.
<b>Continuous process</b>	Ongoing improvement of business processes in terms of quality, improvement cost, or cycle time.
<b>Core competencies</b>	Describe strategic business capabilities that provide a company with a marketplace advantage.
<b>Critical success factors</b>	Quantitative measures for effectiveness, economy, and efficiency; those few areas where satisfactory performance is essential in order for a business to succeed; characteristics, conditions, or variables that have a direct influence on a customer's satisfaction with a specific business process; the set of things that must be done right if a vision is to be achieved.
<b>Customer advocate</b>	The role played by a member of some teams where that individual pleads the case of the customer and calls the attention of the team to issues which would concern the customer.

<b>Customer analysis</b>	The evaluation of customer's conditions and trends relative to a particular product or service of a business—tools include customer focus groups, field trial testing, customer satisfaction measurement, customer feedback systems, and the use of various types of questionnaires and survey instruments.
<b>Enabler</b>	Those processes, practices, or methods that facilitate the implementation of a best practice and help to meet a critical success factor; enablers help to explain the reasons behind the performance indicated by a benchmark.
<b>Entitlement</b>	The best that can be achieved in process performance using current resources to eliminate waste and improve cycle time; obvious improvements identified during the process of benchmarking and which may be accomplished as short-term goals.
<b>Etiquette</b>	The conduct or procedure required to be observed in social or official life.
<b>Exchange</b>	The act of giving or taking one thing in return for another.
<b>Executive champion</b>	An executive supporter who serves as a “militant defender” or advocate of a particular civil right or activity.
<b>Functional</b>	Process benchmarking which compares a particular business benchmarking function at two or more companies.
<b>Generic benchmarking</b>	Process benchmarking which compares a particular business function or process at two or more companies independent of their industry.
<b>Global benchmarking</b>	The extension of strategic benchmarking to a global scale.
<b>Goals</b>	The numerical target value or observed performance which indicates the strategic direction of an organization.

<b>Implementation</b>	Specific tasks that will make a strategy into a reality.
<b>Internal benchmarking</b>	Process benchmarking which is performed within an organization by comparing similar business units or business processes.
<b>Key business process</b>	Those processes that influence the customer's perception of your business.
<b>Leadership goal</b>	A goal whose achievement will place an organization in a leadership position among similar organizations.
<b>Long-term goal</b>	A goal which may be accomplished in a longer term, usually 1 to 5 years.
<b>Milestones</b>	A mark of a significant point in development.
<b>Model</b>	A description, representation, or analogy which is used to help visualize something that cannot be directly understood.
<b>Networking</b>	A decentralized organization of independent participants who develop a degree of interdependence and share a coherent set of values and interests.
<b>Objective</b>	The set of results to be achieved that will deploy a vision into reality.
<b>Parity goal</b>	A goal whose achievement will place an organization at an equal position among similar organizations.
<b>Partner</b>	A relationship between two parties who are associates or colleagues involving close cooperation and implying joint rights and responsibilities .
<b>Performance</b>	Measurement of the performance of one company's product benchmarking against those of another company.

<b>Process</b>	A series of interrelated activities which convert inputs into results (outputs); processes consume resources and require standards for repeatable performance; processes respond to control systems which direct the quality, rate, and cost of performance.
<b>Process benchmarking</b>	The measurement of discrete process performance and functionality against organizations that are excellent in those processes.
<b>Process owner</b>	The individual who exercises the possession or control over a process.
<b>Process stakeholder</b>	Individuals who have an interest in the conduct of a particular process.
<b>Project facilitator</b>	The individual who focuses on the process of benchmarking and makes that process easier for the team.
<b>Project sponsor</b>	The individual who provides the financial support for a benchmarking project; an individual who plans and carries out a project or activity; one who assumes the responsibility for a project.
<b>Protocol</b>	A set of conventions governing the actions of individuals, organizations, or nations as specified by a written agreement; a code prescribing adherence to correct etiquette.
<b>Questionnaire</b>	A set of questions for obtaining statistically useful process or personal information.
<b>Recalibration</b>	To readjust the calibration of a measure; to standardize by determining the deviation from a measure against a standard.
<b>Recycling</b>	To reprocess in order to gain additional information; to return to an earlier condition so that the operation can begin again.

<b>Reengineering</b>	The radical redesign of business processes, organizational structures, management systems, and values of an organization to achieve breakthroughs in business performance.
<b>Reverse engineering</b>	A comparison of the product characteristics, functionality, and performance with similar products made by competitors.
<b>Root cause</b>	The fundamental causal reason for a particular observation.
<b>Secondary research</b>	The practice of searching for information about a particular subject area from indirect sources.
<b>Short-term goal</b>	Goals which may be accomplished within a short time frame, usually less than one year.
<b>Strategy</b>	The plans and means to achieve the goal for a particular objective.
<b>Strategic alliance</b>	A strategic bond or connection between organizations with common interests; an association to further the common interests of its participants.
<b>Strategic benchmarking</b>	A systematic business process for evaluating alternatives, implementing strategies, and improving performance by understanding and adapting successful strategies from external partners who participate in an ongoing strategic alliance.
<b>Strategic intent</b>	A statement of the persistent ambitions of a company which helps to guide its decisions for resource allocation and goal setting.
<b>Strategic planning</b>	A roadmap to gain competitive advantage by achieving goals that define business objectives for critical success factors.
<b>Subject matter expert</b>	An individual whose knowledge of the content of a particular subject is considered to be exceptional.

<b>Survey</b>	To query individuals in order to collect data for the purpose of analyzing some group or sample of a population.
<b>Target</b>	A mark to shoot at; a goal to be achieved.
<b>Team leader</b>	An individual who participates on a team and takes on the leadership role for that team.
<b>Team member</b>	An individual who participates on a team and may take on one or more roles with respect to that team.
<b>Thesaurus</b>	A book of words and their synonyms.
<b>Total quality</b>	A customer-focused management philosophy and strategy management which seeks continuous improvement in business processes using analytical tools and teamwork which encompasses the participation of all employees.
<b>Vision</b>	The achievable dream of what an organization wants to do and where it wants to go.
<b>World class</b>	Leading performance in a process independent of industry, function, or location.